

Message Text

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ORIGIN ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SOE-02 AF-10 ARA-14
CIAE-00 DODE-00 EA-12 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NASA-02 NEA-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OIC-02 SP-02 PA-02
PRS-01 DOE-11 OES-07 SS-15 USIA-15 /166 R

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TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
INFO USDEL MBFR VIENNA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

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USSALTTWO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: JANUARY 18 PRESS ROUNDUP

LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT (JANUARY 23) SAID EVEN AS
DETAILS OF SALT TWO PACT ARE BEING HAMMERED OUT IN GENEVA,
ARMS RACE IS "TAKING AN OMINOUS TURN" BECAUSE OF SS-20,
WHICH CONFRONTS CARTER ADMINISTRATION WITH NEW CHALLENGE.
MAGAZINE SAID SS-20 -- "AIMED AT HEART OF NATO EUROPE" --
COULD MAKE MOCKERY OF ANY AGREEMENT DESIGNED TO CURB COMPE-
TITION IN NUCLEAR WEAPONRY. U.S. NEWS OBSERVED THAT SS-20
WOULD NOT BE COVERED BY SALT ACCORD THAT "CARTER HOPES TO
SIGN IN SPRING. REASON: TECHNICALLY, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS
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AN INTERMEDIATE-RANGE MISSILE, NOT STRATEGIC WEAPON DESIGNED
TO HIT U.S. CATCH, ACCORDING TO DEFENSE ANALYSTS, IS THAT
SS-20 CAN BE CONVERTED 'RELATIVELY QUICKLY' INTO AN INTER-
CONTINENTAL MISSILE CAPABLE OF STRIKING TARGETS IN THIS
COUNTRY. IN CRISIS, SOVIETS COULD HAVE ABILITY TO EXPAND
THEIR STRATEGIC FORCES SUBSTANTIALLY ABOVE CEILING OF 2,400
DELIVERY VEHICLES THAT NEW SALT ACCORD IS EXPECTED TO IM-

POSE ON TWO SUPERPOWERS." MAGAZINE SAID DEPLOYMENT OF SS-20 CONFIRMED IN RECENT WEEKS BY U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES, RAISES ANOTHER QUESTION ABOUT EFFECTIVENESS OF NEW SALT AGREEMENT. THIS PACT, IF APPROVED, WOULD BAR U.S. AND USSR FROM TESTING OR DEPLOYING MOBILE STRATEGIC MISSILE FOR AT LEAST THREE YEARS, U.S. NEWS SAID. SS-20 IS MOBILE, CARRIED ON TRACKED, TANKLIKE VEHICLE. "THIS MEANS THAT RUSSIANS, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, ALREADY HAVE COMPLETED TESTING AND DEVELOPMENT OF A MOBILE INTERCONTINENTAL MISSILE. THEREFORE, THEY WILL NOT BE INHIBITED ON THIS SCORE BY PROPOSED TREATY. U.S., ON OTHER HAND, WILL BE CONSTRAINED SINCE AMERICA'S MX MOBILE MISSILE HAS NOT GONE BEYOND RESEARCH STAGE. AND CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAS JUST VETOED PENTAGON PROPOSAL TO GO INTO FULL-SCALE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS WEAPON IN FISCAL YEAR STARTING OCTOBER 1."

2. BALTIMORE SUN PUBLISHED DISPATCH FROM ITS HONG KONG BUREAU REPORTING THAT CHINA SAID U.S. AND USSR FAILED TO REACH ANY DISARMAMENT AGREEMENTS IN 1977 BECAUSE EACH OF TWO SUPERPOWERS "WAS OUT TO GAIN MILITARY SUPERIORITY AT EXPENSE OF OTHER." A COMMENTARY DISTRIBUTED BY HSINHUA, OFFICIAL CHINESE NEWS AGENCY, CARRIED CUSTOMARY CHINESE WARNING THAT NO TRUST IS TO BE PLACED IN ARMS ACCORDS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON EVEN IF AGREEMENT IS REACHED "ONE MAY BE SURE," COMMENTARY SAID, "THAT EVEN IF TWO UNCLASSIFIED

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SUPERPOWERS CAME TO LONG-TERM AGREEMENT, IT WOULD ONLY SERVE AS AN AFFIRMATION OF THEIR EXISTING STRENGTH AND SMOKE SCREEN FOR NEW ROUND OF ARMS RACE."

3. WASHINGTON POST PUBLISHED ASSOCIATED PRESS DISPATCH CITING CIA ESTIMATES THAT SOVIET DEFENSE SPENDING WAS 40 PERCENT HIGHER THAN AMERICA'S LAST YEAR. NEW CIA REPORT ESTIMATES THAT SOVIET DEFENSE PROGRAMS, IF SOVIETS HAD TO PAY AMERICAN PRICES, WOULD HAVE COST 130 BILLION DOLLARS, COMPARED WITH U.S. DEFENSE SPENDING OF 90 BILLION DOLLARS. CIA SAID SOVIET SPENDING FOR NEW WEAPONS TO MODERNIZE AND EXPAND FORCES HAS BEEN 75 PERCENT HIGHER THAN AMERICA'S EACH YEAR SINCE 1975, AND THAT SOVIET SPENDING FOR WEAPONS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IS "SUBSTANTIALLY LARGER" THAN THAT OF U.S.

4. CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR REPORTED THAT NETHERLANDS GOVERNMENT HAD SAID IT HAS MANAGED TO PERSUADE BRAZIL, WHICH HAS REFUSED TO SIGN NPT, TO PUT ITS FUTURE STORES OF PLUTONIUM UNDER INTERNATIONAL CONTROL.

5. U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT (JANUARY 23) REPORTED THAT

"PAUL WARNKE, IN CHARGE OF NEGOTIATING NEW SALT PACT WITH RUSSIA, IS COMING UNDER INCREASING CRITICISM FROM MEMBERS OF HIS OWN TEAM. SAYS ONE: 'HE IS SUPREMELY CONFIDENT HE CAN TALK RUSSIANS INTO MAKING SHARP CUTS LATER ON IN THEIR MISSILE STRENGTH SIMPLY TO CONTRIBUTE

TO STABILITY -- BUT KREMLIN DOESN'T BELIEVE IN UNILATERAL DISARMAMENT.'"

6. IN RECENT EDITORIAL COMMENT, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH LAUDED ADMINISTRATION'S REJECTION OF PENTAGON'S REQUEST FOR FULL SCALE DEVELOPMENTAL FUNDING FOR MX MISSILE. POST-DISPATCH SAID MX COST, "EXTRAVAGANT AS IT IS, IS NOT MOST SALIENT ARGUMENT AGAINST MISSILE. ONCE DEPLOYED, MX UNCLASSIFIED

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WOULD HAVE CAUSED PROFOUND PROBLEMS OF STRATEGIC INSTABILITY.... PUSHING AHEAD WITH MX WOULD FURTHER COMPLICATE TASK OF WORKING OUT STRATEGIC ARMS AGREEMENT, SINCE WEAPON IS DESIGNED TO PRESENT AN INSUPERABLE VERIFICATION OR SURVEILLANCE PROBLEM."

7. CHICAGO TRIBUNE EDITORIALY COMMENTED ON RECENT PRESS REPORTS THAT ADMINISTRATION HOPED TO GET BREZHNEV TO SIGN LETTER PROMISING NOT TO USE BACKFIRE BOMBER AGAINST U.S. IN NUCLEAR WAR. CALLING THIS REPORTED PROJECT "LATEST COMIC DEVELOPMENT IN TRAGEDY OF SALT TALKS," TRIBUNE ASSERTED "SALT AGREEMENTS CAN BE EXPECTED TO WORK -- THAT IS, IF THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO WORK -- ONLY IF EACH SIDE CAN VERIFY THAT OTHER HAS ONLY AGREED UPON NUMBER OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS. IF MR. BREZHNEV IS TO HAVE BUNCH OF 'CLOSET' INTERCONTINENTAL BOMBERS THAT AREN'T COUNTED, THEN SALT WILL DISSOLVE INTO BITTER, UNSWALLOWABLE MESS." CHRISTOPHER

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